



King County Councilmember

Bob Ferguson

Fall 2007

District 1

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*Above: Bob reviews
5,000 responses to the
citizen survey.*



King County

Dear Neighbors:

As the long bright days of summer give way to fall colors, I write to share the results of my 2007 Citizen Survey. More than 5,000 of you responded between February and July. We now have the results! I found all of them to be of interest. This newsletter outlines the results.

This fall, I am chairing King County's \$4.8 billion budget process. My job is to implement our shared priorities. Your survey choices spoke clearly about the need to prioritize public safety and Metro transit service. I will focus on improving these services.

Sixty percent of you supported a 0.01% sales tax increase for mental illness and drug dependency treatment to help people in crisis stay off the streets and out of jail. You spoke and I listened. I sponsored legislation creating a comprehensive Mental Illness and Drug Dependency Action Plan, and hosted a town meeting on the topic which drew a record turnout of over 400 concerned citizens. I will lead the Council's budget deliberations regarding this critical funding for wrap-around treatment.

I encourage you to visit the Council's 2008 King County budget website at www.metrokc.gov/council/budget for a schedule of public meetings across the county to gather your feedback. These meetings will be televised live and rebroadcast on King County Television (Channel 22 for most cable subscribers) and online at www.kingcounty.gov/kctv. I'll report back at the end of the year.

Thank you again for taking the time to read this newsletter, share your feedback, and help me better represent you.

Sincerely,

Bob

Bob Ferguson

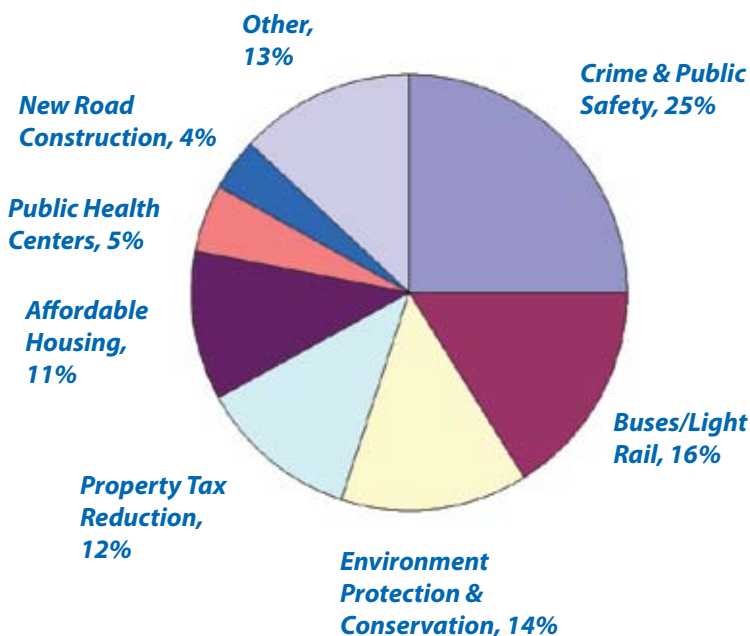


Bob rides King County Metro route 41 to work.

Question: Please rank your highest three priorities from 1 (most important) to 3.

First priority:

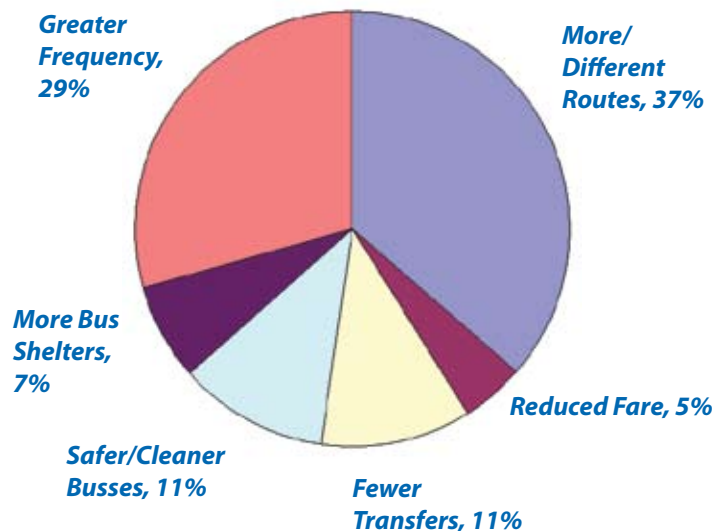
- 25% Crime and public safety
- 16% Buses/Light Rail
- 14% Environmental protection and conservation
- 12% Property tax reduction
- 11% Affordable housing
- 5% Maintaining public health centers
- 4% New road construction
- 13% Other



My observations: Each city within the district had its own priority. For Shoreline, Crime and Public Safety was the number one priority, while in Seattle it was Buses and Light Rail. In Lake Forest Park, Environmental Protection and Conservation was key. Bothell, Woodinville, and Kenmore supported Roads as their number one priority, at a level twice as high as the rest of the district.

Question: If you are a bus rider, what is the most important way that Metro can improve bus service?

- 37% More, different routes
- 29% Greater frequency
- 11% Fewer transfers to get where we're going
- 11% Safer, cleaner buses
- 7% More bus shelters
- 5% Reduced fares



My observations: The results from this question indicate that Shoreline, Kenmore, Lake Forest Park, Bothell, and Woodinville identify increased Metro routes as their top priority, while Seattle residents want greater frequency.

Question: When paying for improvements to our transit system, which methods would you support?

- 29% An increase in the gas tax
- 26% Tolls on certain freeway and thoroughfare lanes
- 24% An increase in the motor vehicle excise tax
- 12% None
- 9% An increase in the sales tax



Bob speaks about the importance of saving our public health centers that were threatened by budget cuts.

Question: The County Council is examining a potential increase of .01% to the sales tax to invest in mental health and chemical dependency treatment designed to help people in crisis stay out of the jails and off of the streets. This will cost a penny on a \$10 purchase. Would you support added revenue for mental health?

60% Yes
40% No

My observations: Across the district there was broad support for the mental illness and chemical dependency sales tax, with Seattle and Lake Forest Park registering the highest levels of support at over 70%. The County, at my direction, has developed an Action Plan to improve treatment and diversion services and the Council will consider the revenue increase to fund the plan during the 2008 budget process this October and November.

Question: The County Council has the sole authority to vote for the mental health tax increase. Should the Council act on this issue directly, or should the Council ask the voters for their opinion in an advisory ballot?

56% Advisory Ballot—citizens should weigh in before taxes are increased.
44% Council should vote directly—we elect you to make these decisions.

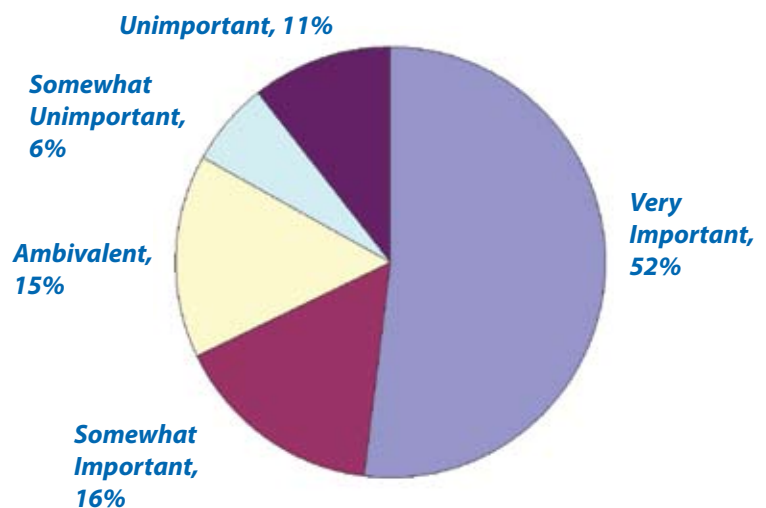
Question: King County narrowly averted a disaster when two public health centers were nearly closed due to lack of funding—both are located in our District. I led the fight to keep these clinics open through 2007. Have you or anyone you know ever used a King County public health center?

46% Yes
54% No

My observations: Residents of Seattle had the highest degree of familiarity with public health centers at 49%.

Question: On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being “very important” and 5 being “unimportant”, how would you rate ensuring access to public health for the uninsured and underinsured?

52% 1 - “Very Important”
16% 2 - “Somewhat Important”
15% 3 - “Ambivalent”
6% 4 - “Somewhat Unimportant”
11% 5 - “Unimportant”



My observations: There are nearly 200,000 uninsured King County residents. While slightly less than 50% of the population has used or knows someone who has used public health centers, the majority believe the public health centers provide valuable services and should be supported.



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2007 Citizen Survey Results

Some comments from survey respondents...

"I really think Washington should consider establishing an income tax as an alternative to higher sales taxes, which hurts lower income families trying to make ends meet. Compared to other areas around the country with a similar quality of life, we pay very low taxes."

Seattle Resident

"We need a public transportation system that is quick, frequent, and reliable. If we get more people on public transportation, there won't be a need to expand roads and [there will be] less traffic."

Bothell Resident

"I drive, own a house, and buy things. I would prefer that transportation issues be funded via sales tax and vehicle taxes. Everyone drives or rides transit but not everyone owns houses."

Seattle Resident

"These were all very well thought out questions. Thank you for the opportunity to respond. Keep up the good work, and good luck on the Council!"

Bothell Resident

"There are too many elections. There should be only one or two during any year. Too few voters decide for the masses. To pass anything it should take 51% of all registered voters."

Kenmore Resident

"Public health, mental health services & services for the homeless and our less privileged citizens should be a priority!"

Seattle Resident

"I strongly support the move to all-mail voting in King County prior to the 2008 general election."

Seattle Resident

"I'm happy with the bus service. Better bus pull-off

areas needed [so as] to not stop traffic."

Lake Forest Park Resident

"In order to keep being a great city, Seattle needs to keep its commitment to public life--good public transit, great art & buildings, great parks & public health."

Seattle Resident

"Instead of a non-event of a mail in election, election day should be a holiday--we should celebrate going to the polls & make a big thing of voting! We are in very real danger of losing our freedoms!"

Shoreline Resident